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ABSTRACT

Designed to provide an experience as close as possible to the actual assessment, this paper presents the revised model of assessment in writing for the Michigan High School Test (HST). The revisions incorporated into the paper reflect the testing transition from the High School Proficiency Test to the HST. Session 1 looks at how well students can think critically and report and/or reflect on their own writing. Session 2 looks at how well they can write an extended piece of writing in response to a given topic. Sample student papers (for each session and at each ability level) and a scoring guide are attached. (RS)

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ED 429 322

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Michigan Educational Assessment Program

High School Test

Writing

Revised Model of the Assessment

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April 1998

Michigan Educational Assessment Program

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These materials were designed to provide an experience as close as possible to the actual assessment. For purposes of clarity, however, some directions from the real assessment have been modified. The test items that follow come from discarded tryout forms.

On the actual Michigan High School Test (HST), students must transfer their final, polished response to a separate answer document during the time limits. They must write their final copy in black or blue ink and must not use correction fluid. If corrections are needed on the HST, students are asked to cross out the error and write the correction above or next to it.

The core content of the Model of the Assessment remains unchanged. The new revisions reflect the testing transition from the HSPT to the HST.

OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATION ARTS: WRITING

This is an activity designed to see how proficient you are at writing. Session 1 looks at how well you can think critically and report and/or reflect on your own writing. Session 2 looks at how well you can write an extended piece of writing in response to a given writing topic (prompt).

Before you begin the Model of the Assessment, you will need to locate a) two pieces of your own writing that best demonstrate your proficiency, and b) several sheets of blank paper on which to write your responses.

SESSION 1

REPORTING AND REFLECTING

DIRECTIONS:

You will have 30 minutes in which to respond to the writing topic below.

You may use a dictionary, thesaurus, spelling and/or grammar book.

The scoring guide that is used to score all responses to the Michigan High School Test (HST) is on the back page of this model assessment. You may want to review it prior to writing your response.

WRITING TOPIC:

Look over the two pieces of writing that you have in front of you.

Identify ideas or wording that you think work well in your pieces of writing and explain why they do.

Use specific details from your piece(s) of writing to clearly illustrate and support the points you make. Your audience will be interested adult readers who **DO NOT** have your two portfolio pieces of writing.

SESSION 2

COMPOSING AND COMMUNICATING MEANING: EXTENDED WRITING TASK

DIRECTIONS:

The purpose of Session 2 is to write a thorough response. You will have 90 minutes in which to write a carefully considered response to one of the writing topics below. You should give careful thought to revision (rethinking ideas) and polishing (editing and proofreading). Organize time in the manner that works best for you.

You may use a dictionary, thesaurus, spelling and/or grammar book.

Note: In this model assessment, two extended writing topics are provided as examples. On the actual HST, students will be given only ONE extended writing topic.

EXTENDED WRITING TOPIC #1:

In dealing with people who have wronged others, some choose justice; some, revenge; some, mercy. Write a paper in which you examine how this choice affects the people involved in the dispute.

You might, for example, do **one** of the following:

explain why justice for you may not be justice for someone else
OR
argue whether some groups in our country have less access to justice than others
OR
consider a time when you felt a situation wasn't fair and you tried to get justice
OR
examine whether television and movies encourage revenge
OR
take any of several other approaches to discussing this idea.

EXTENDED WRITING TOPIC #2:

Write a paper in which you examine how music has an impact on your life or on someone else.

You might, for example, do **one** of the following:

cite specific pieces of music that have had an impact on you or that are meaningful to you, and explain why
OR
consider how different music fits different situations
OR
explore what makes some music memorable and other music forgettable
OR
describe what you've learned through music
OR
consider how music can express an idea
OR
take any of several other approaches to discussing this idea.

Note: On the actual Michigan High School Test (HST), you will have space in your booklet for notes, freewriting, outlines, clustering, and rough drafts.

CONSIDERING YOUR WRITING

Read the attached scoring guide used for Sessions 1 and 2 of the actual HST.

Next, read the accompanying sample student papers.

- Can you see increasing levels of writing?
- What are the strengths of these pieces of writing?
- How do your own writing samples compare?
- What are your writing strengths?
- How could you improve your writing?

Get together with a peer and switch papers.

- How do your peer's writing samples compare with the samples provided here?
- How do your peer's writing samples compare with your own?
- What are your peer's writing strengths?
- What suggestions could you offer your peer?

Ask your teacher or parents to evaluate your writing samples.

- What writing strengths do they see?
- What suggestions do they have?

SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES

Session 1
Reporting and Reflecting

What I think about my writings is many things. My best talent is expressing my feelings on paper. I have a very unique imagination towards writing. The way I go about thinking of Ideas is to use topics that I know about. Like playing basketball. thats my favorite thing to do, so I write about it a lot. Because I have a lot of memories from it

Score: 1

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The wording that I used in my pieces of writing that work well are the use of different words that starts each sentence. I think it works well because it is not as boring as using the same words. Another way is the use of commas and punctuation in the sentences that make my sentences more complex and more exciting to read.

The way that I like the best in wording my writing is the ability to get the point across the first time instead of running the sentence on and on. The ability to keep the reader interested in reading my work is done very well also by choosing my words carefully. By not saying the same thing time after time is another good way to keep the reader interested in my writing.

The End

Score: 2

This sample illustrated the kind of rudimentary development that charactorizes 2-level writing. The ideas are not followed through adequately. The response identifies a feature of writing that works well (the variety of first words of sentences) and explains why it works well (it's not boring). But the explanation is vague and unsupported by any examples from any text real or imagined. In terms of style and mechanics, this response is weaker than the paper that follows.

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My best non-fiction papers are the papers that I have thought about and edited the most. After writing a first draft I often find that some of my ideas are not in the best place. While writing a first draft I let ideas come freely and the paper has little structure. To overcome this, it helps me to jot down important ideas and main points before I begin to write. If I know where I'm going before I begin the rough draft doesn't need to be changed as much and my original ideas are kept together.

My best stories have been ideas that I have thought out in a detailed manner before beginning to write. This allows me to be as creative as I can without discouraging me when my initial spark of an idea doesn't come out right on paper. When I have figured out what I want to say before I start to write I feel I do a better job of describing what I want to say.

Score: 3

Compared to the previous paper, this response is stronger stylistically and mechanically, but weaker in its response to the prompt. The ideas are not followed through adequately. The paper never really identifies any ideas or wording that work well. Instead, the paper describes a highly generic writing process unrelated to the portfolio pieces.

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In my writing about fascism, I tried to use several words that worked well in the writing

Fascism is a repressive one-party dictatorship. I think that these words work well because they explain exactly what the meaning of my paper is about. Its government is characterized by racism and militarism, this also defines what fascism is about. He (referring to Hitler) used clever strategies to make people follow him. In this sentence I am trying to show how intelligent Hitler was to make so many people believe in what he was doing. In the sentence that states: The Natzi's job by Hitler was to eliminate the differences between rich and poor, they would make the German people strong and united. This shows exactly what Hitler was making people do and how rascist they became. I think that when I mentioned the movie that I watched, that it really showed just what fascism could do to normal people like ourselves.

In my writing about Huck Finn, I found several words that expressed the meaning of my paper and how well they worked to make it sound good.

In the novel, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Huck Finn survives many attemps by society or elements of society to change or "destroy" him. This is my opening statement, I think that it explains exactly what I am going to write about. Miss Watson's nagging and insistent interference makes Huck resent home life and its restraints. This sentence explains how Huck feels about being educated and civilized by his guardian.

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Score: 4

SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES

Session 2

Composing and Communicating Meaning: Extended Writing Task #1

Telenisin incourages people to go out and solve problems their own way. Homeum that may not always be the best solution. Telenisin creates alot of problems, because alot of kids match. Kids are easily influenced by many programs. When they see violence on television they think its all right to use this method to solve your problems.

Justice is fair for some and not others, because if you have a jury trial, the people may already have their mind made up weather or not you are guilty. Juris are very prejudice.

Score: 1

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The topic I'm going to write about is "Examine whether television and movies encourage ~~my~~ revenge"

I don't think television and movie encourage revenge. If the kids are old enough to watch the movie they should be old enough to know what's right. I can see why younger kids would think movies are real, but I can't see why there parents wouldn't of already talked to them about them. Movies have ratings for a reason. Parents should not let there children go to movies that don't fit there children. Unless the parents know and trust their children not to repeat the action that take place in the movie or television show.

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Score: 1

My topic to write about is about justice.

I think justice is an act of violations resp. Its being punished correctly not poorly.

For justice is very bad thing like for instance when someone thinks there better than everyone else, but really they are not.

I think that if you do justice you should be rewarded for it I think justice is a good thing, but also think that injustice can be a good thing sometimes to.

I think abortion is injustice because its killing can unborn person. The only time I think abortion is justice is if you've been raped I also think if you don't want it the only justice thing to do is to have it and then if you still don't want the baby then put it up for adoption.

There are lots of justice and injustice in the world. I think that driving while under the influence is injustice I also think doing drugs is injustice, because both booze, and drugs can kill you. I think its injustice if a group of kids are together and they all do something bad, like break someones house window for instance, and then only one of the kids gets blamed for the whole things. I think that its injustice if you've been in trouble with the law once, and then when something goes wrong they automatically think that you done it because of the fact that you've been in trouble before with the law.

Justice also has certain departments to it like justice eg the peace, the courts, when you pay as your tickets, and the health Department, etc.

Its very bad thing when justice is not done to stop racists, and sexists, from being the way they are to people, because if they don't like it they don't have to look at or talk to those people

Score: 2

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People have all different meanings for the word justice. One way to get justice is by using revenge. When people want revenge they want to get the other person back and that's called, making it equal, justice. Whenever someone else tryes to get someone back it doesn't end the arguement. The enemyes continue to take revenge on one another until it gets so out of hand it must stop. Revenge is a risky way to get justice. Revenge can sometimes get yore in trouble with the law. Don't get justice by using revenge. Get justice in a fair, lawful way.

Next to using revenge for justice comes the movies and television programs that influence not just teens, but adults as well. Television programs and the movies usually involve a conflict and in order for that conflict to be solved it must be done with justice. Most television programs offer good ways to solving conflicts. They solve conflicts in a way that I like it, fair. The movies, on the other hand, use revenge, cheating, and unfair ways to get justice. People that watch these movies remember the ways to get justice, especially if its there most favorite movie. They think back to memorys of their own that might be similar to those in the movies and decide its a good way to get justice since it worked in the movies. Theres nothing anyone can do to end the bad ways people use revenge to get justice. Nobody is happy until they have justice. Like many people say, "Life is not fair." That's because of justice, justice will never leave us alone, someone will always be seeking for it.

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Score: 2

Individuals. Single beings. Seperate entities. All These words are words I use to describe the people of This planet. No two people have The exact same experiences in The world; Therefore we are all different. I ask you, the reader, "Am I wrong?" No? Well Then how can we have a standardized justice system or let disputes fall into the hands of other people? We can't because it's unfair. Justice for one person isn't The same for another person. Your principles aren't The same as mine, Therefore my Idea of justice is most likely nothing like yours and thus we would be hard-pressed for a solution if a dispute came up.

I was born in Bayview, Michigan, ten pounds and seven ounces, at exactly 6:28 in the PM. I've had many different haircuts, pets, houses, clothes, and I am now 5'9" tall, weigh 135 pounds and have a 3.5% Fat to overall body weight ratio. How many people can say the exact same thing? None. I am a completely seperate entity from all life that has ever existed before. No one has the exact same philosophies I do and I'm proud of that.

If you read the other essay I wrote about my definition of justice, you'd know I believe that you get what is deserved of you. If you are in a competition and you finish first you should get the prize fair and square because you are better than the rest. If someone cheated and won Then They would be denied The prize. Why? Because to cheat you have to break the rules. The rules of what? The rules of the contest, not the rules of justice. The "justice" is the actual winner receiving the award, not a cheater. The winner worked harder overall to win, therefore The justice is The winner receiving it.

Chances are your (the reader) definition is a more classical definition and you believe That this a rather silly venture of your time without much merit. But Then again, Thats just your opinion.

Score: 3

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In dialing with people who have unorganized attitude, some choose justice, some, revenge, and some, mercy. These three methods can both help and harm the individuals involved in the dispute. All of these can lead to bad things and sometimes good things.

Justice can be the best and fairest way to decide the fate of someone. Taking a person to court or calling the police on that particular person is the best way to go. The term "justice has been served" is commonly heard around the United States and even in the world. It's probably the safest way to get back at someone or a number of people for committing a crime. Honesty is the best policy and taking your complaints to the police is better than getting revenged alone or giving up and ignoring the crimes or incident acts being committed in today's society.

Revenge is one of the most dangerous ways to handle a crime in your neighborhood or any where. Taking things violently can get someone killed. Possibly you have an innocent person you might end up in jail for a night or possibly for years. Taking revenge could affect the person's mind in telling him or her that what they did was right. Even trying to take revenge on someone can drive the person to act crazy or do crazy things. In other words, revenge is the dumbest way to get back at someone.

Mercy is just another way of saying "let's be friends" or "let's stop fighting." It can be good and bad in a number of ways and a good way, for instance, in little arguments like "I'm saying let's just be friends" or "this isn't going nowhere, there's no sense in doing this" is a good thing about mercy. But on the other hand mercy can be a form of revenge.

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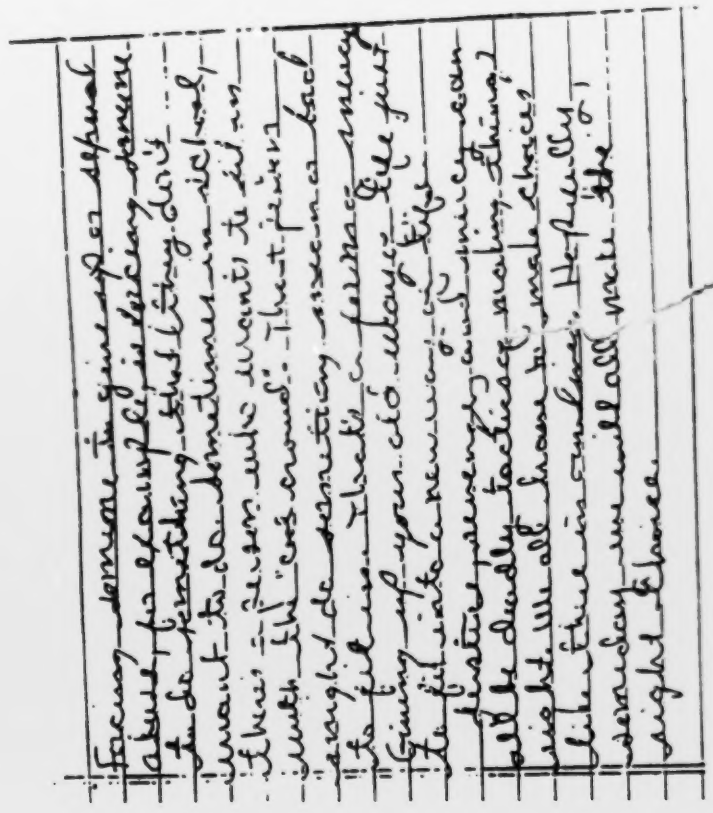

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Score: 3

The idea of justice as a concept for a perfect world. While sometimes justice is served. Often times people are cheated from what they deserve. People in our society have the right to be treated better than that. Why should we have to pay the price of crimes inflicted upon us? I believe justice is a misconception of society today, because we don't know what to believe in anymore. People convicted of our democracy, such as drunk drivers and other types of criminals are put out on the streets with little punishment. Today's democracy does not provide its citizens with the justice they deserve.

The crime of drunk driving is a serious one. The person who was driving has put everyone in danger. That person, the people with him or her and everyone around the driver. While the punishment should be extremely steep, it is not. They get their drivers licenses revoked for awhile and community service time. While many of these people are remorseful for what they did, it is too late. The damage has been done. Some of these people don't learn from their mistakes. They go right back out on the street. Jenny for a report performance for example, I had a friend whose niece that was some years older than I. The girl was beautiful and got the best care of her brother who had Down Syndrome. It was right before she was to graduate from high school and the girl was taking her brother to get ice cream. Suddenly, a truck swerved around a corner, coming at this car at about 60mph. It had a big head on the front of it. The truck leapt up from right through the windshield of the other car. The boy was extremely lucky. He only had cuts and bruises. However, his sister wasn't so

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lucky. Hes head was cut off and partially torn away from the H bod. She died instantly. The man who had been driving the truck had a record of drunk driving and just got out of prison. He didn't have a license and he was so drunk that he didn't even know that he hit another car.

Justice is necessary in our society today, because of all the wrongs that can happen. Democracy must pull itself together and give us a good honest system that we can depend on. The story above illustrates that a first time offender can have a mistake. But the second time, it's a habit. It also shows how the current system has failed us. All anyone wants is to be right and safe. Democracy must allow its citizens the opportunity to have an actual system & a correct concept of justice.

Score: 4

SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES

Session 2

Composing and Communicating Meaning: Extended Writing Task #2

Music is very memorable and forgettable. If a person dies, there might be a song that reminds you of that person. But when it's forgettable you might not like that particular song.

Memorable music reminds you of so much stuff that has went on in your life. Country music is the best kind of music I listen to and it brings back old memories. Every time I hear that certain song that memory is not forgettable.

Forgettable music everyone seems to forget, you don't actually forget about music, you just don't like it. That's how I look at it. Music is something that will stay with us for a long time even when its memorable or forgettable.

Score: 1

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Every song has a meaning from some kind of situation. Some songs are about someone dying. Others are about drugs, and violence. There are also songs written about love, or breaking up with someone.

Some music is more relaxing than others, so if you had a bad day at work or school this kind of music would be better for you instead of hard rock or rap. This kind of music is good just to listen to.

Hard Rock is more of a dancing type music or it's just good to listen to when you're having a party. Rap is another type of party music. This music is more for the gang members, because it talks about drugs and violence then about love or death, (or a family member dying).

Country music tells a story. Its good music to listen to, to relax, or at a party. Country fits just about every kind of situation there is.

Music could be good, but some of it's Bad. Music can effect the way people act or think. Some music effects people in a bad way, but music could also effect them in a good way also.

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Score: 2

Music has a great impact on my life and everybody does I can. Most of us listen to music sometime in our lives, that's what makes it interesting. It has such a variety to choose from that everyone can find what they like to hear.

I believe that everyone has that one special tune, or maybe more, that gets them feet tapping and makes them sing along. There is a broad enough range of music for every situation. There's loud or fast music when you are angry, and there's soft or slow music when you are calm. This gives us the perfect opportunity to tell about how some music fits different situations.

Everyone knows about football players, angry and mad, with adrenaline pumping. Well, there's more to it than that. Football players aren't always that way. They need something to get them pumped up. Our football team here uses loud, heavy music. This makes you sit up and gets the blood flowing. Everyone has their own type of music for every situation.

Some music is even memorable to me. I remember going to my first concert with my parents. I remember who was there and what they sang. I remember going to a concert with my friends. This is probably even more memorable than any other time I listened to music. Every time I think about it I feel like I'm still there. All these are memorable to me and I can tell because it is all as clear as it was a few years have gone by.

I've also learned a lot about what kind of a person a musician is by listening to the words of their music. Also, by listening to the words you might be able to get advice or thoughts of your own.

The greatest impact music has on me is my mood. The music I normally listen to is Rhythm + Blues which is soothing and suits almost any occasion. I choose to listen to this music when I'm happy or sad because it is soothing. When I'm really down in the gutter I sometimes listen to country. It seems to pick me up a little. Now when I'm really upset I like to listen to Heavy Metal or Alternative. This allows me to blow off steam.

This is the impact that music has on me. I believe that most people will say that music has about the same impact on them.

Score: 3

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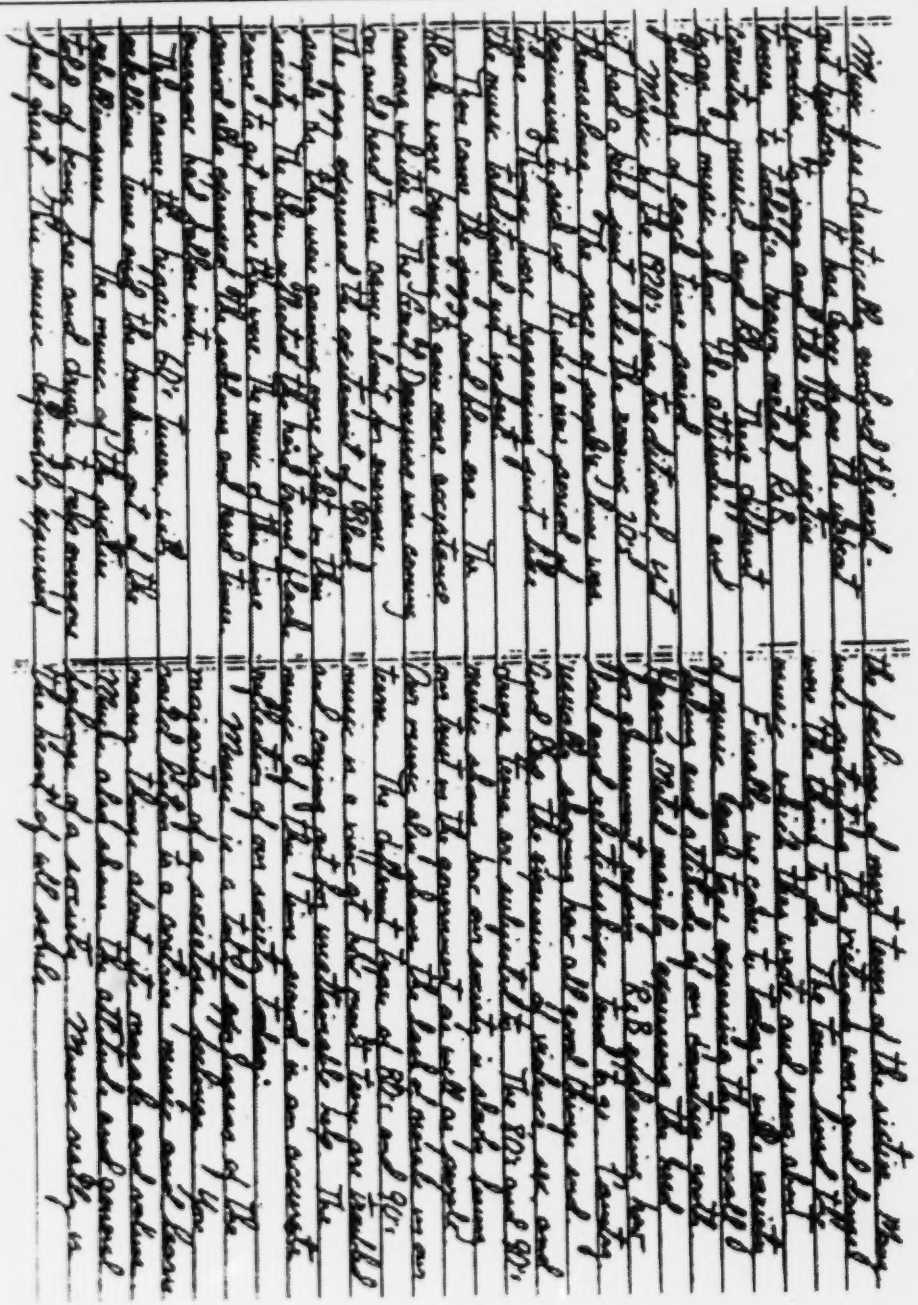

Score: 4

Scoring Guide for Communication Arts: Writing

Here is an explanation of what readers think about as they score your writing.

Session 1

4 The written response demonstrates the ability to reflect critically on one's own writing; ideas are supported by specific examples or details from the portfolio pieces. Organization and form enhance the central ideas and move the reader through the text. The voice and tone are authentic and compelling. There may be minor surface feature errors.

3 The written response demonstrates the ability to reflect on one's own writing; ideas are somewhat supported by examples or details from the portfolio pieces. Organization and form are appropriate and present the ideas coherently. The voice and tone support the ideas conveyed. Surface feature errors may be noticeable.

2 The written response demonstrates some ability to reflect on one's own writing; ideas are presented as generalizations about writing or simple summaries of portfolio pieces. The voice and tone may be inappropriate or uneven. Limited control of surface features may make the writing awkward to read.

1 The written response demonstrates the attempt to reflect on one's own writing; ideas are supported by few, if any, details and examples. There is little discernible shape or direction. There is little control over voice and tone. Limited control of surface features may make the writing difficult to read.

Session 2

4 The writing is engaging, original, clear, and focused; ideas and content are richly developed and supported by details and examples where appropriate. Control of organization and transitions move the reader easily through the text. The voice and tone are authentic and compelling. Control of language and skillful use of writing conventions contribute to the effect of the presentation.

3 The writing is generally clear, focused, and well-developed; examples and details support ideas and content where appropriate. The presentation is generally coherent, and its organizational structure is functional. The voice, tone, diction, and sentence structure support meaning. Use of writing conventions is not distracting.

2 The writing has some focus and support; ideas and content may be developed with limited details and examples. The presentation shows some evidence of structure, but it may be artificial or only partially successful. The tone may be inappropriate or the voice uneven. Sentence structure and diction are generally correct but rudimentary. Limited control of writing conventions may interfere with meaning some of the time.

1 The writing has little focus and development; ideas and content are supported by few, if any, details and examples. There is little discernible shape or direction. The writing demonstrates no control over voice and tone. Faulty sentence structure and limited vocabulary interfere with understanding. Limited control of writing conventions (such as spelling, grammar/usage, capitalization, punctuation, and/or indentation) makes the writing difficult to read.

Session 1 and Session 2 - writing is not ratable if:

A off-task
B illegible
C written in a language other than English
D blank/refused to respond